

Bolton Towns Fund Board

1.00pm, Thursday 24th September 2020

Microsoft Teams Virtual Meeting

Attendees

Belinda Beaver	BB	Chamber of Commerce (Chair)
Cllr. David Greenhalgh	DG	Leader, Bolton Council
Cllr. Martyn Cox	MC	Deputy Leader, Bolton Council
Michelle Horrocks	MH	Head of Economic Development, Bolton Council
Cathy Wignall	CW	Programme Manager, Bolton Council
Paula Connor	PC	Project Officer, Bolton Council
Paul Whittingham Council	PW	Assistant Director Economic Development, Bolton Council
Yasmin Qureshi MP	YQ	Bolton South East
Chris Green MP	CG	Bolton West
Mark Logan MP	ML	Bolton North East
Mark Head	MHe	Bolton & District Civic Trust
Darren Knight	DK	Bolton CVS
Jon Lord	JL	Bolton at Home
Alec Colbeck	AC	Midia Group
Roddy Gauld	RG	Octagon Theatre
Pete Courtie	PCo	Arts Council (Observer)
Tim Vaughan	TV	Moorgarth
Jonathan Seddon	JS	Seddon
Baroness Newlove	BN	University of Bolton & Bolton College (Vice-Chair)
Rosie Jenkins	RJ	MHCLG
Marc Watterson	MW	Arup
Amanda Halford	AH	Cytiva
James Gordon	JG	Gordon Moon Properties
Sue Temperley	ST	JCP
Wirin Bhatiani	WT	Bolton CCG
Patrick White	PW	Metro Dynamics
Christina Shepherd	CS	Cities and Local Growth
Samantha Elliot	SE	Bolton Council
Shane Green	SG	Metro Dynamics
Laura Boardman	LB	Principal Project Officer, Bolton Council
Suzanne Hall	SH	Principal Marketing Officer, Bolton Council
Caroline Hansell	CH	Principal Project Officer, Bolton Council
Phil Lamb	PL	Principal Project Officer

Apologies

Eamon Boylan	EB	Chief Exec, GMCA
Gerry Brough	GB	Director of Place, Bolton Council
Tony Oakman	TO	Chief Executive, Bolton Council
Ibby Ismail	II	Bolton Solidarity

Notes of the Meeting

1. Welcome

BB welcomed all to the meeting and reminded all of the virtual meeting protocols. She added that the chat transcript and any presentations will be circulated after the meeting.

2. Apologies

Apologies noted above.

3. Declaration of Interests

None noted.

4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting and Actions Arising

BB noted that all the actions arising from the last meeting had been completed. No issues were raised therefore the minutes were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.

BB advised that the £1 million accelerated funding had been confirmed. This will enable work on some projects to be fast-tracked and will need to be spend by the end of March 2021.

5. Story Board Narrative of Bolton's Town's Investment Plan

PW of Metro Dynamics introduced himself. He then gave a presentation on the Story Board of Bolton's Town Investment Plan. PW advised that discussion would be opened up to the floor after the presentation. PW set out what will be included in the Town's Investment Plan (TIP). He advised that over the next few weeks Metro Dynamics will be drafting the TIP. They are in the process of drawing up details on match funding and private sector support.

PW went over the timescale for production of the TIP. The TIP will be presented to the Towns Board on 19th October for comment before being submitted to MHCLG at the end of October. The TIP will outline the impact of Covid 19 on the town and the urgency of investment and the projects that are ready to start. The TIP should ask for a further advance of funds where projects are 'shovel ready'. Evidence which will be included in the TIP are things such as decline in footfall, impact on retail, etc. The town's retail offer is reducing and less office space. The urban economy of Bolton is a clear asset – this will be drawn out in TIP.

PW went on to say a clear shortlist of projects is emerging, Bolton Market, The Wellsprings, Public Realm Improvements, Library and Museum and Cultural Support.

BB asked that if there were any questions that Board Members had that they raise them in the discussion later or put them in the chat facility. She reminded all that the presentation will be circulated with the minutes for information after the meeting.

6. Project Prioritisation and Project Update

CW gave an overview of the project prioritisation process. She asked Board Members to consider if the projects felt right. She asked that Board members ask questions/make comments in the chat facility or ask questions after she had presented the agenda item. CW

shared the projects and scoring with Board Members. She asked Board Members to provide feedback in the next 10 days as this will allow time for changes to be made.

CW explained that a project pro-forma had been completed for each of the seven projects. These gave a brief overview of the project, key priorities, etc. Council Officers then had a group discussion and analysed each project against a framework which had been provided by Metro Dynamics. This had been shared with the Towns Fund Hub and MHCLG. The projects were assessed against a set of criteria. These were:

- Strategic Fit
- Deliverability
- Additionality i.e. new jobs created.
- Local Support
- Clear Rationale

It also looked at whether there was a delivery plan in place for the project, land ownerships, experience (have we got the expertise to deliver the project?).

Four projects scored very high against each of the criteria. These are:

- The Wellsprings
- Public Realm Improvements
- Bolton Market
- Bolton Library and Museum

CW explained that we are now looking for the Boards approval to formally take these projects forward.

Two projects received a mixed score against each of the criteria i.e. high on some aspects but low to medium on others. These were:-

- Cultural Development Role
- The Wellness Centre – there is a need to assess local support to take this forward.

One project has been eliminated following the project prioritisation process due to scoring low on all criteria. This was Elizabeth House.

CW went on to explain the rationale for taking projects forward such as strategic fit, clear path to deliver project, potential for fast track, etc. CW then went on to give an overview of why each project was chosen to be taken forward and gave an overview of project costs.

7. Next Steps

CW gave an overview of the next steps. A Project Officer has been assigned to each of the projects and will complete an outline business case which will be attached as an appendix to the TIP. Match-funding needs to be firmed up and we will be seeking letters of support from partner organisations. We have a Quantity Surveyor working with us to ensure that the project costs stack up. A Towns Fund Delivery Programme will also be established which will identify risks and interdependencies.

8. Discussion

CW asked for questions and feedback from Board members.

RJ highlighted that in terms of the Cultural Development role revenue funding is an exception.

JL felt that the success of the Wellness Centre would be down to when people move into the new residences planned on the old Bus Station site. It is potentially a white elephant with no residential in place. He highlighted that it is clearly the role of the Board to feel on board with the projects that go forward and that links need to be established with the wider town centre regeneration.

DG thanked CW for her presentation. He raised the issue of linkage to the green area on the Moor Lane site and stated that the design must be right. He requested that the Council and Board have sight of any designs as soon as possible.

MC agreed with DG. Designs must be in line with what is already there particularly on Le Mans Crescent. TV stated safety need to be included.

MC asked could the projects exceed the £25 million would each project be balanced or have different scenarios been taken into account. CW proposed that only 5/6 projects go forward to the next stage. The package as a whole will add up to £25 million.

BB thanked all for their comments. She asked that any further comments are emailed to Michelle Horrocks within 10 days so that they can be noted and taken account of. Email to michelle.horrocks@bolton.gov.uk.

9. Any Other Business

BB informed the Board that this would be CW's last meeting as she had secured a new job. BB thanked CW for all her work over the past months.

10. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place on 22nd October 2020 at 4pm. The TIP will be circulated on the 19th so that Board members can review.